



ESO NEWSWIRE

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- The Elder Service Officer Program was initiated in 1999 and was known initially as the Elder Contact Officer Program.
- There are over 100 Maine Law Enforcement Officers designated by their agency as ESO Officers.
- The Administration on Aging estimates that by 2005 there will be approximately 175,000 residents of Maine who are 65 and older.

BATH POLICE OFFICER DANIEL COUTURE NAMED ESO OF THE YEAR

Attorney General G. Steven Rowe named Bath Police Department Officer Daniel Couture, 29, Elder Service Officer of the Year. Couture, a Topsham resident, is the Bath PD's liaison to seniors in the community. He is an active member of TRIAD, a national effort that depends on local partnerships between seniors and law enforcement for the purpose of preventing crime against seniors. He is a regular presence when Bath seniors get together. Bath Police Chief Pete Lizanecz called Couture "the essential link between our older folks and the police department."

The Maine Attorney General's Elder Service Officer Program was created in 1999. The Attorney General invited law enforcement agencies to designate officers to receive enhanced training in elder related law enforcement topics. There are currently over 100 Elder Service Officers in police and sheriff's de-



Attorney General G. Steven Rowe, Officer Dan Couture, Bath Police Chief Pete Lizanecz and Karen Elliot, Director of Regional Operations, BEAS.

partments throughout the State.

Attorney General Rowe believes the Elder Service Officers (ESOs) are becoming increasingly important because the elderly are so frequently the targets of exploitation, fraud, and abuse. Rowe instituted the Elder Service Officer Award this year to call attention to the exceptional service he sees ESOs rendering to Maine seniors. The honor will be awarded annually by the Attorney General to a law enforcement officer who performs exemplary work with seniors in the prevention of fraud, financial exploitation, and abuse.

"Our seniors deserve the best information and protection we can give them. I am proud that so many good officers like Officer Couture have taken on this special duty, and I hope all Maine communities will have ESOs in a few years," said Rowe.

A CHANGE IN STAFF AT THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE

Detective Mark Walsh, Elder Crimes Investigator for the Office of the Attorney General, left his position there in May of this year to work for



Attorney General G. Steven Rowe and Detective Mark Walsh

Unum-Provident as an investigator in their Special Investigations Unit. Mark was the founder of the Maine ESO program and strove to make it the success it is today. Mark worked tirelessly in his pursuit of those who financially exploited the elderly, and his expertise and dedication will be sadly missed by those who worked with him and those he served. Mark has been replaced by Detective Michael

Webber, formally of the Lewiston Police Department and the Maine Computer Crimes Task Force. Mike will continue Mark's work with the Elder Service Officer Program and looks forward to hearing from all of you. Mike can be reached at 626-8594 or via email at michael.l.webber@state.me.us.

- 84% of all elder abuse cases are never reported. As many as 5 million seniors are abused each year in this country.
- Older adults who are abused or mistreated are three times more likely to die within the next decade than the same age adults who are not mistreated.
- 40% of all elder abuse involves some sort of financial exploitation. This is of increasing concern because nearly 70% of our nation's household net worth is controlled by people over the age of 50.
- About 80% of all persons who financially exploit the elderly are family members and caregivers.
- Neglect is the most common form of abuse in domestic settings.
- The U.S. Census figures indicate that Maine is the fourth "oldest" state in the union.

BREAUX UNVEILS COMPREHENSIVE "ELDER JUSTICE" EFFORT TO COMBAT ELDER ABUSE

WASHINGTON (May 20) – Sen. John Breaux (D-La.), chairman of the Senate Special Committee on Aging, today announced the first-ever comprehensive federal effort to address elder abuse, crimes against seniors and to guarantee protections for every older American.

"Thousands of crimes against seniors go unaddressed each and every day," said Sen. Breaux. "These elder justice measures tackle these crimes

and provide seniors the protections they need to live safely and securely. Since not one single employee in the federal government is devoted full time to address elder abuse, far too many of these cases of elder abuse will go unaddressed and far too many people will suffer unless we act and act now."

Research in the field is scarce, but by some estimates up to five million cases of elder abuse, neglect and exploitation oc-



You can view the full proposal at <http://www.aging.senate.gov/elderjustice/billssummary.html>

cur each year. Sen. Breaux's proposal is designed to create a national focus on elder abuse to increase detection, prevention, prosecution and victim assistance. With 84 percent of these crimes never reported, the plan elevates crimes against seniors to the national stage to the level of crimes against women and children. This proposal lays the cornerstone of federal leadership to assure that states, communities, consumers and

ELDER BILL CONT.

and families will have access to information and resources they need to confront this difficult issue.

In the United States today, the federal government spends only \$153.5 million, including grants to states, on programs addressing issues of elder abuse, neglect and exploitation, with funds spread thinly across the myriad of agencies and programs responsible for protecting older Americans. In sharp contrast, the federal government spends \$520 million dollars on programs combating violence against women and \$6.7 billion dollars on child abuse prevention efforts.

"The signs are hauntingly familiar," Sen. Breaux said. "Just like early efforts to address child abuse and domestic violence, millions of cases of elder abuse occur each year but we know too little and do too little to stop them. This proposal provides the federal leadership so those on the front lines are more empowered to protect seniors from abuse, neglect and exploitation."

Sen. Breaux's comments came at a press conference to unveil the proposal and to introduce an Aging Committee hearing on financial exploitation of the elderly, the third in a series of elder abuse hearings the committee has held this Congress. Sen. Breaux and the committee heard from victims, experts, prosecutors and even a criminal on the prevalence of these crimes of exploitation and the need for more resources to combat these abuses. The committee also released a "white paper" on elder abuse at the hearing.

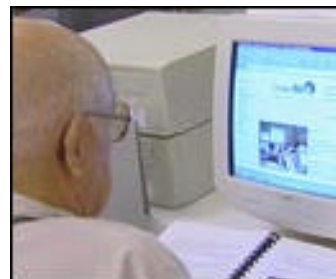
From confronting child abuse and violence against women, experts have found that the best approach to addressing these crimes is a combined law enforcement and public health approach. Sen. Breaux's measure establishes dual Offices of Elder Justice at the U.S. Departments of Justice and Health and Human Services to coordinate the disparate federal, state and local elder abuse prevention efforts, while also housing policy experts and funding programs to study, detect, treat, prosecute and, most importantly, prevent elder abuse, neglect and exploitation of not only seniors living independently, but also those in residential care facilities.

The proposal also establishes new programs to assist victims and provides grants for education and training for law enforcement and prosecutors while developing more forensic expertise. It enhances reporting of crimes in long-term care settings and requires FBI criminal background checks for those employed by long-term care providers, rather than state checks alone, to capture criminals who "state hop."

Finally, Sen. Breaux's plan includes new measures to increase and retain staff in long-term care facilities including a staff demonstration project, training and degree programs, and incentives to draw more people to health professions serving elders.

Electronic Mailing List Created to Facilitate Communications About Elder Issues

A list serve has been created to help Maine ESOs better communicate amongst each other. Hosted by YAHOO! and maintained by the Attorney General's Office, subscribers can post a message and it will be distributed instantly to all of the other officers who have subscribed to the free service. Topics could include upcoming events, scams, questions, etc. Interested? You can subscribe by sending an email to maineeso-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.



Maine TRIAD's Look North To Combat Fraud at Spring Summit

By Officer Paul Gaspar

Seniors from TRIADs throughout Maine came together with police, service providers and local dignitaries to kick off their annual Summit on May 3^d. Held at Andover College in Portland, the summit provided an opportunity for Maine's 15 TRIADS to come together and share their successes and challenges over the last year. The summit also gives seniors and service providers an opportunity to receive valuable training in current issues facing seniors. Classes in obtaining resources, building groups that work, elder abuse and overcoming challenges in operating a TRIAD were just some of the sessions offered.

The highlight of the event was the issue of international telemarketing fraud against seniors. Inspector Sylvain L'Heureux of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police was the events keynote speaker, concentrating on a new effort underway to reduce, prevent and investigate fraud against the elderly. Project COLT is a multi-national, multi jurisdictional effort underway between the United States and Canada. Project COLT brings together the RCMP, FBI, United States Customs Service, and the United States Postal Inspection Service in preventing and investigating mail fraud and illegal telemarketers doing business in Canada targeting American citizens.

Sadly, Inspector L'Heureux reported that the investigations undertaken by COLT almost exclusively involve U.S. citizens. L'Heureux was also quick to point out that it's not always seniors that are the victims, but that they do represent a majority of victims in the illegal activities. In his presentation, L'Heureux identified California, Texas and Pennsylvania as the top 3 states for victimization in 2001 with the average loss per victim of \$4,800.00. Total losses due to telemarketing and mail fraud totaled over 12 million dollars. In short Inspector L'Heureux's parting words are clear in both countries; *"If it sounds too good to be true, then it probably is!"*

Other speakers for the event included a lunchtime address by Attorney General G. Steven Rowe and opening remarks by Ricker Hamilton of the Dept. of Human Services, Cumberland County Sheriff Mark Dion, Chief Jerry Hinton of the Maine Chiefs of Police Association and Jud Dolphin of the Maine state chapter of AARP.

A special thanks goes to Criminal Justice Chair Peter Hussey and his students, as well as the staff at Andover College for their overwhelming support and assistance during the summit. Also to the over 100 seniors and professionals who came to participate, share and learn. Anyone wanting more information regarding TRIAD, or Project COLT can contact Officer Paul Gaspar of the Cape Elizabeth Police Department at (207) 767-3323.



Inspector Sylvain L'Heureux of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Community Liaison (and ESO) Officer Paul Gaspar of the Cape Elizabeth Police Department

Three Wilton Men Charged in Elder Home Invasion

Wilton: Three men have been charged for their roles in the home invasion of two elderly sisters in Wilton, Maine. The sisters were roused from their beds by masked men, then bound and gagged with duct tape and robbed. Patrick McCall, 18, formerly of Wilton and a 17-year old – juvenile from Wilton were arrested on March 12, 2002 and charged with Robbery, a Class A Felony. About \$13,000 in cash was recovered as was most of the

Wilton Home Invasion Cont.

Wilton Police Chief Parker credited Franklin County Sheriff's Department Detectives David St. Laurent and Tom White, the Property Crimes Task Force, and Wilton Police Department for solving the robbery so quickly.

the suspects bought with the money at Wal-Mart, Olympia Sports and other stores.

According to Chief James Parker of the Wilton Police Department, the arrests were made quickly as the result of a successful collaboration among area agencies.

The attack occurred about 3 a.m. when the intruders, wearing masks and gloves, entered the locked home in the center of downtown Wilton. They ransacked the home, searching for money and reportedly threatening the elderly victims with bodily harm. When they found what they were looking for, they released the victims and fled.

According to news accounts, the victims, ages 88 and 90, were terrified but not physically hurt from the attack that left duct tape plastered across their mouths and strapped around their wrists.

A third arrest was made in the case several days later. William McCall, 20, of Wilton was charged with Receiving Stolen Property. According to Jay Police Chief Larry White, McCall was behind the wheel of a 1990 Mitsubishi Eclipse sports car that was purchased with some of the stolen money.

TRIAD CORNER

TRIAD is a national effort that depends on local partnerships between seniors and law enforcement for the purpose of preventing crime against seniors

Currently, there are 15 TRIAD groups across the State of Maine.

TRIADs around the State have been busy hosting local events recognizing the importance of the elder population in their communities. On May 16, 2002 the Penobscot County TRIAD held a well attended awards ceremony. Charles Siaz, coordinator of the project, presented the awards to sponsors and supporters of the project.

On May 18, 2002 the Lincoln County Triad held their annual Elder Appreciation Day with nearly 100 in attendance. Attorney General G. Steven Rowe was the keynote speaker and addressed concerns surrounding prescription drugs, elder scams, and financial exploitation.

On June 21, 2002 the Oxford County TRIAD held it's annual Elder Appreciation Day with approximately 200 people in attendance! Local members of the Sheriff's Department, the Attorney Generals Office and Elder and Adult Services cooked hotdogs and hamburgers for attendees and served ice-cream for desert. A local man played the guitar and participants could receive a massage or have their blood pressure checked. Ricker R. Hamilton, Protective Program Administrator for the Portland office of the Bureau of Elder and Adult Services was the key note speaker.



Participants enjoying hamburgers and hotdogs at the Oxford County TRIAD's Elder Appreciation Day

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ESO—The Maine Attorney General's Elder Service Officer Program (formerly Elder Crime Contact Officer Program) was created in the Spring of 1999. The Maine Attorney General asked each law enforcement agency head to designate an officer or officers who would be amenable to receiving enhanced training regarding elder related law enforcement topics. The voluntary program was designed to fill a need that was forecast due to the expected increase in population of citizens over the age of 65. Over 100 Maine law enforcement officers responded and many of them have attended trainings designed to enhance their abilities to respond more effectively and efficiently to the special needs of older Maine residents. For more information, please contact Detective Michael Webber at the Maine Department of the Attorney General, 626-8594.

ESO PROFILE: LINCOLN COUNTY SHERIFF'S DETECTIVE SERGEANT MICHAEL MURPHY

(Note- This issue will begin the ESO Profile, a look at the officers who make up the group)

How long have you been a Police Officer and what is your background?

I have been with the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office for three years and have been in law enforcement for more than twenty years. I started my law enforcement career in 1981 with the U.S. Army Military Police. I was trained as a Military Police Patrol Dog Handler and served in Germany. I was honorably discharged in 1990 and was hired by the Rockland Police Department as a Patrol Officer. I was also assigned as a member of the department's Harbor Patrol. In 1996, I was promoted to Detective with the Rockland Police Department. In 1999 I was hired by the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office as a Detective Sergeant with the Criminal Investigation Division where I specialize in financial and computer-related crimes. I have received training from U.S. Department of Justice, International Association of Computer Investigative Specialists, National White Collar Crime Center and the Maine Criminal Justice Academy. I am a member of the Maine Computer Crimes Task Force serving as the state



*Detective Sergeant Michael Murphy of the
Lincoln County Sheriffs Department*

coordinator for Associate Members.

What do you enjoy about working in police/elder issues?

I have been involved in investigating Elder Abuse/Exploitation issues for about three years. I feel that it is very important to protect our most valuable resource, our senior population. These people have earned and deserve the right to live in peace without becoming victims of criminal activity.

I also like the cookies!